

**Through the black colonial lens, viewing slavery and
focusing on *A Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass***

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Of Bachelor of Arts in English

Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

January 2024

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, Except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other Degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

The thesis titled “Through the black colonial lens, viewing slavery and focusing on *A Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass*” submitted by Md Tasnimul Hasan Abir, (22103059) of Fall, 2024 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English on January 2024.

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Dedication

I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Mahruba Mowtushi for her assistance and encouragement during this journey. His ideas and teaching style have always grabbed my attention in his classes. Her perspectives and way of thinking have amazed me all the time, and it makes me want to be like him one day. I want to convey my sincere thanks to my parents as well as friends for their immense mental support while conducting this dissertation.

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Abstract

In this paper, I will be exploring how colonialism spread and how colonialism has changed the world. When European colonizers settled in Africa and Asia, they established colonies and started ruling new foreign lands around the world. Through colonization, they controlled trade around the world. The colonized people had nothing to do with the powerful military approach of the colonizers, as the Europeans claimed to be more superior and civilized. The colonizers claimed that they would civilize and educate the savage natives. White colonizers settled in various parts of America and strengthened colonial rule. Plantations in colonial America required labor. Which they brought from Africa as the colonizers started trade with the African blacks. Thus, slaves had been brought in exchange for British goods. The slaves were transported through the middle passage, which is known by the name of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. So, I am arguing that colonial rule led to chattel slavery. Chattel slavery was different as it addressed slaves as private property and gave them no rights. The number of slaves involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade makes it a significant event in American history. The slaves were treated like animals on the plantations; they were not even properly fed. The torture and beating slaves endured during the course of slavery cannot be explained in words. Slave masters had the power to do anything with their slaves and could order anything to be done. White masters had sex with the black slaves, which was a common practice among masters. A black woman could not do anything to protect her chastity, as she had no rights to do so. Inhumane treatment and harsh conditions only gave slaves agony and sorrow. Black slaves, who were men, could not even protect their wives or children from the master. If a master wanted to have sex with any slave, there was no stopping him; any slave could do nothing against him. For the slaves, the master

was always right, no matter what. Until slavery was abolished, the suffering of the slaves continued. The abolition of slavery was not easy, as the Americans had a biblical justification for slavery and it was a source of free labor for their plantations. But the key fact here is that chattel slavery began in America as a result of colonialism. Fredrick Douglass was a slave himself who had nothing to wear or eat; he slept on the floor and suffered from the harsh realities of slavery. He had seen the cruelty of slavery with his own eyes and gave readers a glimpse of it in his novel *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. During his time as a slave, he saw how slaves suffered. He saw the suffering and inhumane conditions of slaves. But as he grew up, he started learning from a mistress and understood that education can bring some light into his dark. Douglass and Abraham Lincoln were like friends and had a profound impact on the abolishment of slavery. So, in this paper, I will be analyzing how Chattel slavery started from colonialism from a colonial lens, and through the analysis of *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, I will try to briefly analyze how slaves were treated in the plantation and what the life of an African slave was like. I will also be exploring things that helped British colonialism spread across the globe. Europeans used trade, education, religion, and weapons to colonize the natives of Africa and Asia. Other continents were bound to trade only with the British Empire, and this helped the Europeans control the economies of these regions. When white Europeans first came to Africa and Asia, they told the natives that the whites were civilized and educated, so they would civilize and educate the native people through colonialism. But their true purpose was to achieve their own interests and make slaves suffer in the process.

Chapter 1

Introduction:

English colonization began in the early sixteenth century. The colonizers were looking for new land for resources and labor. Military force to control the people who refused to submit to colonial rule. The Dutch colonizers started trading goods with the local Africans in exchange for slaves. The British arrived soon after, established their colonies, and took over the land. Colonial rule has imposed its own rules on the African continent. The colonizers had one interest, and that was exporting goods. They claimed that they would civilize the African black people, but they failed to provide Africans with the necessary supplies. European colonizers started setting up colonies in Africa, and by the 20th century, 90% of the continent belonged to European nations. Colonial rule had taken over Asia and Africa to make their own nations rich in wealth. Colonization in Africa has had a profound impact on its society, politics, and economy, which has become an important part of these nations. The colonizers claimed to be civilized and superior. According to them, only the white Europeans were civilized, and the non-white or black people of Africa and Asia were uncivilized and uncultured. Colonialism expanded in many parts of the world, and the people who were colonized had to obey the colonial rule. The missionaries followed wherever the colonial empire went. Christianity also helped spread

colonial rule. The colonizers turned natives into Christians, and they enforced colonial rule upon them. Colonialism was never for the betterment of the colonized people, as claimed; rather, it only served the purpose and interests of the colonizers. Their trade, commerce, and colonial rule prospered, but not the colonized, who were suppressed by their colonial rulers. They used their religion, books, and, lastly, weapons to enforce their colonial rule over the colonized Africans and Asians. When settlers first set foot on foreign lands, they occupied land and convinced the

Natives about their superior culture and civilization. Their claim was that they could educate and civilize the more inferior nonwhite people, who were a group of savages. Slavery: slavery was the treatment of humans as one's property or belonging. Slavery has existed in ancient societies since ancient times. In all the ancient empires of the world where slavery was present, slaves were entitled to rise to positions of higher status and marry. But the key fact that makes American slavery unique is that it was institutionalized, which left the slaves with a trans-Atlantic slave trade and slavery. As the demand for labor grew in colonial plantations and new settlements, European colonizers had to look for sources of cheap labor. Thus, slave trade was the best option, and slave trade began through the middle passage, which is also known as the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Slaves were sold by African kingdoms, but these people were war prisoners or poor members of society. Slaves were transported through ships. On the ship, they

had to endure suffering from the disease and hunger. Sailors were brutally tortured and had sex with black women. These were very common on slave ships. But a large number of slaves died during the journey. Many even took their own lives. Dead slaves were thrown into the water.

After the slaves arrived in America, they were sold to various white masters of the newly colonized land. In the auction, black slaves were displayed, animals had their teeth inspected, and female black slaves were displayed for the white master to see. Black slaves could not even stop a white master from removing the cloth covering the breasts. These are all part of the history of slavery. Slave children in the plantation played while they remained naked, as they were provided with only 2 shirts per year. They suffered from the tortures and beatings of the masters.

The church also played a huge role in slavery, as slaves were taught to obey their master, who had a religious explanation for slavery. According to the "Curse of Ham" and their beliefs that blacks were meant to serve the white masters, Christianity supported slavery, and blacks were converted to Christianity and made to believe the same thing often, while African women were beaten with the whip after being tied to a tree, and they had no clothing for their naked bodies.

Acts of violence like these were common. White masters often had sex with black African slaves, and it led to pregnancy. The child who was born will be sold or raped by the master as well after growing up. The tragedy of slaves was that they could do nothing to protect them, their families, or their children from the grasp of the white masters. White masters had the power to command a slave to do as he wishes and do anything he pleases. Fredrick Douglass was one of

the most influential men in 20th-century America. Well, he was a slave who saw the treatment of slaves and the harsh reality of chattel slavery. In his autobiographical novel *A Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass*, he talks about his experience as a slave and the events he witnessed on the plantations. He somehow learned to read and write and realized that only through learning could he break the chains of slavery and become a freeman. The beatings and whippings he received during his days as a slave have given rise to his desire to be a freeman. He runs away and continues a life as a freeman; he was the central voice of the abolition movement. He was a great speaker and gave a true picture of slavery to the white population. Abraham Lincoln was a great friend of Fredrick Douglass, whom he also admired. As the civil war was about to start, President Abraham Lincoln understood that slavery would not survive the war, but the nation would. Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery, which started through colonialism in 1865, as the 13th Amendment was made. Therefore, it can be stated that colonialism is the core factor behind chattel slavery, and Fredrick Douglass portrays the dark reality of slavery in his autobiography, which was abolished in 1865 through the 13th Amendment.

Chapter 2

Literature Review:

In the literature review section, I will be presenting and talking about relevant sources that are related to my topic and key words. The key words I will be looking for in various texts and articles, such as slavery abolishment and colonial rule, Fredrick Douglass, Trans-Atlantic slave trade, slave ship, Orientalism, colonial past, colonizers. I have used Google Scholar, text books, JSTOR, and poems to collect data to support my paper. As a literature student, I am doing qualitative research, which gives me the scope to use quotes and points to support my argument.

In this specific article, I will be focusing on how British settlers, or Europeans, started enslaving Africans in 1640. Slavery began in the Jamestown colony of Virginia. However, the first Africans came to Virginia in 1619, and chattel slavery was not industrialized by then. (Gruber).

In this article, we can also see the colonial report of the year 1610. Jamestown bears proof of the enslavement of Native Americans by the colonial British settlers. In the war of 'New England colonies' (1636–1638), the Pequot tribe members were defeated and enslaved by the colonizers. (Gruber). The British colonizers settled in North America between 1607 and 1733) and slavery became "institutionalized" and basically "race-based" by 1660 (Gruber). Institutionalized chattel slavery was introduced after "Christopher Columbus" arrived in the new land. Chattel slavery was developed by Spanish settlers in 1500. (Gruber). Slavery was an integral part of the Spanish and Portuguese colonial economies by 1519. (Gruber).

There are so many articles in various sources about colonialism, but in this article, some fascinating findings are shown. It has been 136 years since the Berlin conference was held in 1885. The conference was held to discuss how western powers would divide up Africa (Gatsheni). The British Empire suppressed the Atlantic and African slave trade. (Gatsheni, . The Haitian Revolution of 1791–1804 is a symbol of black resistance against slavery and racism. As slavery was a European institution, colonialism has changed African history forever, and slavery was an aftermath of colonialism. (Gatsheni).

This article focuses on how the British Empire benefited from slavery and how the abolition of slavery happened. The enslavement of Africans provided the British Empire with free labor, on which the empire prospered through much of the 18th century. In 1833, slavery was outlawed in Britain, and an anti-slavery society was established. Abraham Lincoln, the anti-slavery president of America, supported the abolition, and in 1865, the 13th Amendment was signed, which ended slavery. (History.com Editor).

African enslaved women were a minority, as men were given the most priority in terms of enslavement. This article focuses on the fact that Africans were transported to Europe and America by Spanish colonizers. (Wills).

Colonialism is one of the most influential processes that happened around the globe. It has influenced and changed cultural practices and norms during colonial rule. The evils of colonial rule can never be denied. (Horvath 45). Colonialism, or colonial conquest, occurred because the Europeans had better arms and a better military. Traditional societies were basically restructured in the process of colonialism. The present culture of the previously colonized area is in colonial formation. (Dirks 1-3). As colonial rule expanded the need for African workers and Greece, it led to slavery. (Dirks 20). The relationship between colonizers and colonized has formed class divisions, making blacks slaves and whites masters of slaves. (Dirks, 21).

Slavery was present in various parts of the world since ancient times. Those who had the power to rule over the less privileged class made them workers and enslaved them. Slavery was a part of every ancient civilization in the Eastern Hemisphere. In the Iberian Peninsula, a power struggle existed between Muslims and Christians between 718 and 1492. (Langley 25).

Christopher Columbus started his voyage in 1493 and enslaved native tribe members. (Langley 26). Spanish America received nearly one million slaves as a result of the Atlantic slave trade; these slaves were from Africa (Langley.28). African slaves were the backbone of Spanish colonies. Africans were used for labor in every colony. Though in the Spanish colonies, African slaves worked more in urban areas (Langley 30). In Spanish colonial America, the slave

population was controlled by violence. Many slaves tried to resist in many ways, but only a few slaves could ensure their freedom after running away (Langley.31). African slaves had to go through the harsh journey across the Atlantic, and African slavery was a source of labor for colonial America.

In the book *Discourse on Colonialism*, the author provides colonial criticism. The colonialists have killed in Indochina; they have tortured in Madagascar; and they have enslaved and imprisoned the black Africans. They have used various strategies to make black slaves and themselves masters (Cesaire 32).

This is a racist novel where blacks have been objectified. Blacks have been portrayed as being inferior and barbaric. Kurtz is seen as a black person who is mysterious. The company captures him as a leader or tribe leader of the tribes in Congo (Conrad 84). The company feared that Kurtz may turn into a rebel and others may also revolt, which was a danger for the colonizers. So, they captured him with a motive to kill (Conrad 88). This made the path open for the colonizers to colonize and enslave the black Africans.

In chapter twenty of Part 3, the novel "Things Fall Apart" shows that Okonkwo returned to his clan after 7 years of exile. He was certain that after he returned to the clan, he would be recognized by his fellow clan members (Achebe 151). By the time Okonkwo came to his clan, he

realized that a lot had changed. White missionaries have come to his land, established courts, and started colonial rule (Achebe 154-156).

In this book, "Economic History Review," the origin of America started in 1607, when captain John Smith established Jamestown, Virginia, as England's first permanent mainland for settlement. British settlers achieved huge success in economic expansion, and Georgia became a huge economic unit (Allister 244-245). In the year 1776, British America had the highest per capita income in the world using an indigenous labor force (Allister 245).

The book gives an in-depth view of slavery and the condition of slaves in Africa. Here in chapter one, by the age of six, her happy childhood was no more because she was born as a slave (Jacobs 44–45). After being sent to her new master, Dr. Flint, her brother was also purchased by them, which brought happiness to her mind (Jacobs 45). Mrs. Flint was a brutal lady, for whom seeing a slave being whipped was a very normal thing, and she was a devoted Christian. Slaves were given a very small amount of food (Jacobs 51). The young Linda had to go through such torture, which cannot be explained in words. She was kept locked in a room for a day many times. A black couple quarreled in the presence of the overseen, saying that their master was the father of their child as they were black but the child had a fairer complexion. As a result, he was beaten overnight (Jacobs 53). A young slave girl once gave birth to a child who was almost white. The child died, and the mother of the girl thanked God because she did not want her child to come

here and become a slave like her and suffer (Jacobs 54). In chapter three, "New Year's Day," we get to see the reality behind slavery. Hiring day started on January 1 for the slaves of the South. From January 2, they started working on various plantations. From this day until Christmas Eve, they had to work without stopping, and they got 4 or 5 holidays according to their master's will. The most generous masters were surrounded by slaves who begged those masters to hire them. If a slave does not go with his new master, he has to go through whipping and is locked up in jail until he agrees to go with his new master (Jacobs 55). A mother led her seven children to the auction block. She knew that a number of her children would be taken away from her, but all seven were taken by a slave trader, who refused to say where he would be taking them. She asked God why he did not kill her. Linda had no words to ease her pain (Jacobs 55-56). Another method the master used was getting rid of old slaves (Jacobs 56). An old woman served her master for 70 years; when they moved to Alabama, she became helpless, and she was left to be sold for 20 dollars (Jacobs 56). The young boys were brutally whipped by the master, but William, Linda's brother, hated the idea of being whipped (Jacobs, 57-59). Linda remembers the first time she was punished. Linda was given a new pair of shoes by her grandmother. But Mrs. Flint was angry with her for the noise of Linda walking in her new shoes. Linda had to take the shoes and stockings off and walk on the snow. On that day, several inches of snow had fallen (Jacobs 59). After returning home, the grandmother found out that her son had run away, but he was captured again and sent to jail in chains (Jacobs 60-63). In chapter five, "The Trials of

Girlhood," we see that Linda has become a 15-year-old girl. Mr. Flint started saying foul words to her, and she could understand the meaning of them. Mr. Flint had the intention of violating her, and he made it clear that Linda was his property and he could do whatever he wanted to (Jacobs 68) In chapter six, Linda is trying to avoid being violated by her master. He never lets anyone whip her and does not whisper himself (Jacobs 72-73). Mrs. Flint became more jealous of Linda, as she was now 16 years old. Mr. and Mrs. Flint had frequent arguments (Jacobs 73). It was very common for slave owners to be the fathers of many black slaves. Southern women knew it, and yet they had to marry these white slave owners (Jacobs 76–77). They claimed these black children to be their property. These children were passed to slave traders (Jacobs 77). In chapter seven (The Lover), Linda tells Mrs. Flint that she wants to marry a free nigger. Mr. Flint hits her and reminds her that he is the master and he has the right to do anything with her and even kill her if he wants. The lover wanted to buy Linda's freedom, but the doctor wanted to keep him (Jacobs 80-81). When she started to talk to his lover at the corner of the street, her master was watching from the window, and she ran into the house with fear, but she was glad that her lover was a free man and Dr. Flint could do nothing to him. (Jacobs 83). In chapter 8 of "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl," we see the dark truth about slavery. Some black men were so tortured by the whip of their masters that they gave their white masters free access to their wives and daughters. Black Africans are meant to be slaves in their eyes (Jacobs 86). In chapter thirteen (The Crunch and Slavery), we see that religion is used to manipulate the black slaves.

The slaves were provided with texts that they could read. It is through them to obey their masters no matter what, and they must please their heavenly masters (Jacobs 112-114). In chapter 16 (scenes at the plantation), we see that Linda is sent to work on a plantation. Her daughter soon learned that she was a slave as hell. Linda needed permission to send her daughter to her grandmother for a cure. Linda planned to visit home with another young man, who went to town to see her mother secretly. The head to go at night; if the master finds out about it, they will be punished for it (Jacobs 131). Then again, we see that Linda sees her son Benny, who feared that his mother might die on the plantation. The child cried while his mother left; on her way back, they met four patrols but did not encounter them. Linda was happy to see that their dogs were not with them (Jacobs 131-132). Linda had to get the permission of Dr. Flint to spend a Sunday in town; this proves that a slave had to do everything according to the will of his or her master (Jacobs 134).

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery. His mother was a slave, and his mother was a white woman. His mother was taken away and hired at a firm; they were separated, as it was a very common thing (Douglas 13). He only saw his mother four or five times in his life. She came to see her at night; she lied down with him, and when he woke up, she was gone. They never had good communication between them. She died, but the news of her death did not disturb me that much. There was a possibility that his master might be his father (Douglass 14). The slaves on the farm were provided with a monthly allowance. The children were given two coarse linen

shirts per year. When these were not usable, I had nothing to wear. Naked children, both girls and boys, could be seen naked all year. Their bed was on the cold, damp floor. The overseas had one job, which was to beat and whip the black slaves. Colonel Plantation was a booming economic hub, as all the work here was done by slaves (Douglass 19). Douglass grew up to see the narrative of his childhood. He did not have so much work and had a good connection with Master Daniel. But most of the time, he was naked. He had nothing but a single-course linen shirt covering his, but the feet were not covered. He suffered from colds and hunger. Although his old master whipped him sometimes, he suffered most from the cold. Like all the other slaves, he was also provided with a small quantity of food. The black children were given food on wooden trays and fed like pigs. None of them had spoons; they used oyster shells or their naked hands. At the age of 7-8, he moved to Baltimore to live with Mr. Hugh Auld with the permission of his old master (Douglass 28-29). He was happy to hear the news and look forward. It is clear that he had been. He only knew the day of the week, not the

So, as a reader, it is clear to me that they were not educated and had no skills but to work on a plantation. That was the first time he had ever been out of Colonel Loyd's plantation. This journey was something that changed him (Douglass 30). His new teacher taught him the alphabet

during his stay in Baltimore. It was the time when he first learned about the word abolition and its meaning (Douglass 31-38). When his old master died, he was sent for the valuation property (Douglass 39). He was sent to the place where he was born, where slaves were valued alongside sheep and cattle. He saw again the cruelty of slavery when he was brutally tortured by Master Andrew (Douglass, 40-43). He and other slaves again fell into the hands of strangers after the deaths of Master Andrew and Mistress Lucretia. Proving that they did not have any freedom or free will. Douglass was now a slave of Master Thomas (Douglass 55–59).

This specific documentary focuses on the conditions of slaves in the United States. Black slaves were not recognized by the state, and they had no right to food or property. Enslaved workers were properties of their master and were not entitled to any kinds of rights. (Documentary: A History of Slavery in America).

This documentary discusses the colonization of America. European colonizers enslaved Red Indians before they started the Atlantic slave trade. To meet the demand for labor, English settlers looked to Africa for labor. Pilgrims and missionaries played a huge role in colonizing the Native Americans. During the reign of King James, the 1st attempted again to colonize North America. That's how settlers first colonized James in Virginia (“Colonial America documentary: Timeline in History” 00.08.41-01.02.30).

This video specifically focuses on the Atlantic slave trade and the treatment of slaves on slave ships in America. Africans were captured from Africa. European slave traders took advantage of tribal wars to get slaves. Slaves were traded in exchange for guns. When female blacks were brought on the stage for sale, their breasts were exposed for the white buyers to see. Negros were made to sing and dance on slave ships. Once they were brought up, their fate lied in the hands of their master. As they were now the properties of their new masters (“Ebony: The Last Years of the Atlantic Slave Trade” 00.01.04-00.12.44).

This video talks about the journey of Frederick Douglass from a slave to a statesman and how he and Abraham Lincoln played a huge role in the abolishment of slavery. Abraham Lincoln was an anti-slavery president. He was also the central voice of the abolitionist movement. The mixed efforts of Lincoln and Douglass led to the abolishment of slavery (“Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln: Two Leaders” 00.02.21-00.04.30).

Lincoln abolished slavery, being the anti-slavery president. There were almost 4 million African slaves, and the constitution had to be changed through the 13th Amendment (“Lincoln abolishes slavery “00.00.47- 00.01.34). The trans-Atlantic slave trade has exploited enslaved Africans. Slavery was an institution that subjected and enslaved Africans. The trans-Atlantic slave trade had destroyed and killed so many Africans to such an extent that it cannot be explained in words.

Slaves earned liberty at the hands of Abraham Lincoln. Fredrick Douglass led the abolition movement (“Abraham Lincoln and Fredrick Douglass” 00.00.30–00.01.

This documentary talks about the slave narratives by Fredrick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs and also focuses on how Frederick Douglass became an abolitionist and how slavery was abolished in the United States of America. Douglass hated the idea that some people are born to be slaves and some people are just born free. In his biography, he asks himself, “Why am I a slave?”

(Amend 00.12:52–00.14.08). He believed that people like him were part of the national society

(Amend 00.15.30-00.16.17). The liberty of the black people was robbed by the white masters.

The United States was guilty of practices that even disgraced a nation of savages (Amend

00.18:30–00:20:04). Douglass urged Lincoln to abolish slavery. On April 9, 1863, the war

ended. Douglass had a voice against slavery, and Lincoln made it possible through the 13th

Amendment (Amend 00.33.02–00.35.56).

In the poem *The White Man’s Burden*, we see that the author is talking about the good sides of colonial rule. The poet is talking to a white audience and asking them to send the white youth to rule the non-whites. He assumes that non-whites are savage and devilish (Kipling 2-8). The whites must serve the lands they have conquered for the sake of the nonwhite people (Kipling 11-19). It is the whites' duty to civilize the non-whites(Kipling 17-18). Even after the white man

has done so much for them, they will cry for their old barbaric ways (Kipling 20–27). Here, the white man has done so much to civilize the nonwhites, but they will never be thankful for it (Kipling 50-56). Here, the point of view of Kipling is subjectifying the black, as it is a highly racial poem of the colonial era by a colonial poet.

Chapter 3

Methodology:

For this specific research, I will be using the qualitative research method. Being a literature student, this method is appropriate for my research, as my research answers questions about why and when. I have also used the theory of colonialism to analyze colonial rule. Besides, I have analyzed the novel *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* to explore the harsh reality of slavery and how Frederick Douglass played a huge role in the abolishment of slavery.

Chapter 4

Fredrick Douglass and Abolishment of slavery:

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery. His mother was a slave, and his mother was a white woman. His mother was taken away and hired at a farm; they were separated, as it was a very common thing. (Douglass 42). Fredrick Douglass was among the greatest orators in American history. He was one of the most photographed Americans of the 19th century; he escaped enslavement to become an abolitionist, became a Republican statesman, and was also a prolific writer. Douglass was born around 1818 as Frederick Augustus Washington. He was born into slavery in Eastern Maryland by a black woman and a white man, and it was presumed that his enslaver was his father. He only saw his mother a handful of times in his whole life. His mother lived on a plantation 12 miles away, and they did not share the usual son-and-mother relationship. At the age of 8, he was loaned to his enslaver's brother in Baltimore, where he learned to read and write. His mistress never had a slave before and did not know it was illegal to teach a slave; her name was Sophia Auld. She was teaching her son the ABC's, and there was Douglass eager to learn, and that was all he needed—that little spark of light into his mental bondage. When Thomas realized it, he forbade the lessons as they were illegal, though young Douglass continued to teach himself. At the age of 15, he was sent to a notorious slave breaker who whipped and brutalized Douglass regularly. At the age of 16, Douglass fought back and won. He was never beaten after that day. When he landed in New York, he wrote back to Anna, and they were married after he was reunited with Anna in Massachusetts and chose a name for himself, Fredrick Douglass. At the age of 23, he spoke of his experience of enslavement in front

of a white audience. Nan Tucker, Massachusetts. He had a natural gift for communication. He was eloquent, charismatic, theatrical, and even funny. He was giving a firsthand account to the Americans, so the abolitionists understood that they had a star in their hands. They asked Fredrick to join the anti-slavery society as a paid lecturer. He was attacked by a mob of native Indians while on a tour of the Midwest. At the age of 27, Douglass published his first biography in 1846. Within 3 months, his memoir sold over 5,000 copies, which were also translated into French and Dutch. His memoir became widely famous in Europe, and he became famous. He flew to Europe as he was still a slave; he went to Europe as a cooling period. There, he talked about the abolition of slavery in the United States and started gathering supporters. He returned to America and started publishing the newspaper North Star, which was an anti-slavery newspaper. The abolitionist newspaper, the North Star, was important because he could get his message out there and write thousands of articles throughout his career. In that time of history, being a black owner of a newspaper was a big deal. In Rochester, Douglass and Anna worked as conductors of the railway and helped enslaved people flee to Free states. Douglass advocated for the rights of women, and he was the only African American in the first women's rights convention. The Ladies Anti-Slavery Society invited Douglass to give speeches on various occasions. He claimed that this nation is guilty of crimes that would even disgrace a nation of savages. He talked about independence and liberty. Douglass became a member of the Republican Party and pressured Lincoln to stand against the mistreatment of African American

soldiers. President Lincoln and Douglass had a relationship that was back and forth. There were times when he was very frustrated with President Lincoln and how slow he was to move towards abolition. But Frederick knew that the civil war was about bringing down the institution of slavery. Frederick's importance during this period was that he pushed Lincoln and agitated him. After the Civil War, Frederick advocated for African American social and political rights. He was the first African American to be nominated for vice president, the first African American U.S. marshal, the first African American Ambassador, and many more. In his lifetime, Frederick Douglass was more famous than President Lincoln, President Ulysses S. Grant, and General Custer. A famous quote by Douglass says, "I never want to look like a happy, amiable fugitive slave, and when you look at a picture of me, you are never going to deny that. I am a man worthy of freedom, worthy of citizenship." At the age of 8, he was loaned to his enslaver's brother in Baltimore, where he learned to read and write. His mistress never had a slave before and did not know it was illegal to teach a slave; her name was Sophia Auld. She was teaching her son the ABC's, and there was Douglass eager to learn, and that was all he needed—that little spark of light into his mental bondage. When Thomas realized it, he forbade the lessons as they were illegal, though young Douglass continued to teach himself. At the age of 15, he was sent to a notorious slave breaker who whipped and brutalized Douglass regularly. At the age of 16, Douglass fought back and won. He was never beaten after that day.

Chapter 5

Colonialism and Slave Trade:

Colonialism is defined as control by one power over a dependent area or people. When one country violently invades and takes control of another country, it claims the land as its own and sends people or settlers to live on that land. European colonizers applied force to settle in various parts of the world. Colonialism is one of the most influential processes that happened around the globe. It has influenced and changed cultural practices and norms during colonial rule. The evils of colonial rule can never be denied after what the British have done to their colonized subjects in Asia and Africa (Horvath 45). Colonialism, or colonial conquest, occurred because the Europeans had better arms and a better military. Traditional values and culture were of no value to the British people. For them, only the European culture and norms were proper. The present culture of the previously colonized area is in colonial formation (Dirks 1-3). Colonialism was practiced in England, the Netherlands, France, and Germany; basically, all of them were European. These powers began building their empires overseas. Western powers started colonizing different parts of the world and established colonies through settlers. Once the settlers had settled there, they started exploiting the native people on their own land. Colonialism occurs when one nation subrogates another. Conquering its population and exploiting it often while forcing its own language and cultural values. The colonizers ruled the colonized people by

establishing colonies with the ultimate aim of economic dominance. Colonial rule never served the native people; rather, it was in the interest of colonizers. The policies of the European countries only strengthen the home country's economy. Agreements and policies restricted the colony to trade only with the metro pole or the mother country, which lasted till the late 19th century. In chapter twenty of Part 3, the novel *Things Fall Apart* shows that Okonkwo returned to his clan after 7 years of exile. He was hopeful that, after his return to the clan, he would be recognized by his fellow clan members (Achebe, 151). By the time Okonkwo came to his clan, he realized that a lot had changed. White missionaries have come to his land, established courts, and started colonial rule (Achebe 155–156). Colonial power justified their conquests by asserting that they had a legal and religious obligation to take over the land and culture of indigenous people. They came and convinced the natives that the whites or Europeans were educated and civilized, but the natives were uncivilized, uncultured, and savage. The colonizers have come to educate them and make them civilized. But it was a scam; the Europeans colonized foreign land, and the natives were exploited by the colonizers and became the colonized. Colonizers argued that they were acting in the best interests of those whose lands and people they exploited. Colonial powers typically attempt to impose their own languages and cultures on the indigenous people of the countries they colonize. White colonizers had established their control over foreign lands only to rule the natives, and they had done it all around the world. The American Revolution started in 1776, and most countries gained independence in the 18th and 19th

centuries. The British colonial rule in India started in the 1700s, and India gained independence in 1947. The exploitation and torture of British colonial rule went to such an extent that it led to the suffering of the colonizers. Christian missionaries were active in all of the European colonies because the metro pole was Christian. The Europeans had a moral and religious justification for their colonial rule. According to the whites, their conquest against the natives was their role in civilizing the barbaric or savage natives, and it was for the wellbeing of the natives. The white colonizers had their own humanitarian and religious goals behind their colonial rule. Europeans assumed that Europe should civilize nonwhite people beyond the seas. The non-white people should get the blessings of medicine, law, and Christianity. Missionaries supported colonialism, thinking that it would give them the chance to spread Christianity in Africa and Asia. By the 18th century, European colonizers wanted firm control over the unexplored regions.

The trans-Atlantic slave trade has exploited enslaved Africans. (Muhammad 2016). Slavery was an institution that subjectified and enslaved Africans. The trans-Atlantic slave trade had destroyed and killed so many Africans to such an extent that it cannot be described in a few words. Slaves earned liberty at the hands of Abraham Lincoln. Fredrick Douglass led the abolition movement. (Abraham Lincoln and Fredrick Douglass, 00.00.30–00.01.20) Thus, trans-Atlantic slavery was one of a kind in terms of brutality and cruelty. Slaves who arrived in America had to face the cruelty of slavery. Slave owners showed no money to the black African slaves. As slaves, they were not even considered to be humans. Slaves did not have enough

clothing to hide their bodies. On slave ships, women were raped by the European sailors. Sailors having sex with black slaves on slave ships has become a common thing. Black slaves had only a little space for each of them; they could not stand or stretch their legs. Slaves were often washed with the hands of white colonizers to prevent diseases and keep them clean, as they were a means of profit for them. If slaves died in the car to ensure profit by providing proof of purchase, As European colonizers colonized America, they had a huge labor demand. To fill their demand, they victimized Africans. Slaves here are the easiest way to get free labor, so they used it for their own interests. European colonizers came to Africa and started trading slaves to meet their demand for labor.

In chapter 8 of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, we see the dark truth about slavery. Some black men were so tortured by the whip of their masters that they gave their white masters free access to their wives and daughters. Black Africans are meant to be slaves in their eyes (Jacobs 63). On the plantations, slaves worked from sunrise to sunset; they had no time for leisure. Slaves were not entitled to any rights. Slaves barely had any clothes or food; they had to sleep on the floor and live a life of misery. Sorrow and suffering were common parts of their lives. Slaves only received a limited amount of supplies to keep themselves alive. They were legally property of their master and had the obligation to do anything he wanted to the black slave. Getting whipped by the lash or beaten was a very common thing. Slave women were often whipped while their breasts remained exposed. Black slaves feared being whipped so much that they gave

their wives and daughters to the masters, and the white masters had sex with them. Slaves had not even the last dignity as humans; they were only tortured by the white masters, who were descendants of British colonies. Household slaves were of a brighter complexion than most African black slaves. The white master had sex with these black slaves, and it was commonly practiced across various states. Black women slaves had nothing to do with it, as they had obeyed their masters. In chapter five, *The Trials of Girlhood*, we see that Linda has become a 15-year-old girl. Mr. Flint started saying foul words to her, and she could understand the meaning of them. Mr. Flint had the intention of violating her, and he made it clear that Linda was his property and he could do whatever he wanted to (Jacobs 86). In chapter six, Linda is trying to avoid being violated by her master. He never lets anyone whip her and does not whip her himself (Jacobs 72-73). Mrs. Flint became more jealous of Linda, as she was now 16 years old. Mr. and Mrs. Flint had frequent arguments (Jacobs 76-79). Slaves had no dignity for themselves, as slave women had no power to stop their white masters from having sex with them. White masters could do anything with anyone they desired, and even some male slaves did not stop their masters from violating their wives or children.

In this book, *Economic History Review*, the origin of America started in 1607, when captain John Smith established Jamestown, Virginia, as England's first permanent mainland for settlement. British settlers achieved huge success in economic expansion, and Georgia became a huge economic unit. (Allister 245). In the year 1776, British America had the highest per capita

income in the world using an indigenous labor force (Allister 245) The Colonial American economy prospered from the slave trade, and thus it can be ensured that it was in the interest of the white colonizers, and colonial rule was the core factor behind slavery. Slavery is the treatment of humans as personal property, deprived of personal rights, which has occurred in many parts of the world. But one institution stands out for both its horrible scale and its lasting legacy. It occurred in the late 15th century and lasted until the 19th century. Which also brought 10 million Africans to the Americas. The impact it would leave not only affected the slaves and their descendants but also the economies and histories of large parts of the world. There had been centuries of contact between the British and the Africans. But the slave trade began in the 1400s through the Portuguese colonies in Africa and Spanish settlements in the Americas. The crops grown in the new colonies were labor-intensive, and there were not enough settlers or servants to cultivate the new lands. Red Indians were enslaved; many died from disease, and others resisted. So, to meet the massive demand for labor, the colonies looked to Africa. African slavery existed for centuries in various forms. Some slaves were servants with terms and the chance to buy one's freedom. Others were more like European turfs. In some societies, slaves could be part of a master's family, own land, and even rise to positions of power. But when whites offered rum, guns, weapons, and manufactured goods for slaves, African kings and merchants had little reason to hesitate. They viewed the people not as fellow Africans but as criminals, as the slaves who were loaded on the ships loaded as many slaves as possible. Slaves were marched to the shore,

then they were shaved to prevent flies and branded. The captains killed or threw people who were sick or weak; they cut and kept their ears as a proof of purchase to ensure profits. Some slaves thought of Europeans as cannibals who came back for more again and again. Slaves killed themselves by starving themselves or by jumping into the sea. Captains kept all the slaves below deck. Women and children were kept above the deck and raped by the whites. Men were made to dance in order to stay in shape. Whites made huge efforts to justify the theory that the blacks are inferior and the whites are superior compared to the blacks. Religion was used to support this theory. The whites need some basis to justify their claims to be superior. This slavery in Europe and the Americas acquires a racial basis, making it impossible for slaves and their future descendants to attain equal status in society. In every way, the Atlantic slave trade was an injustice on a massive scale. The effect of which continues long after its abolition.

The church that taught the slaves to obey their master no matter what Christianity had as a justification for slavery. According to the "curse of ham" in the Bible, black Africans were meant to be slaves and serve the white masters. Slavery was industrialized, and slaves were deprived of any kind of rights. Slavery lasted until 1865, a very long time. Through the 13th Amendment by Abraham Lincoln and the Abolition Movement, slavery was abolished in 1865.

Lincoln abolished slavery, being the anti-slavery president. There were almost 4 million African slaves, and the constitution had to be changed through the 13th Amendment. (Lincoln Abolishes Slavery, 00.00.47–00.01.34). The trans-Atlantic slave trade has exploited enslaved Africans. (Muhammad 2016) Slavery was an institution that objectified and enslaved Africans. The trans-Atlantic slave trade had destroyed and killed so many Africans to such an extent that it cannot be explained in words. Slaves earned liberty at the hands of Abraham Lincoln. Fredrick Douglass led the abolition movement. (Abraham Lincoln and Fredrick Douglass, 00.00.30–00.01.20).

Chapter 6

Fredrick Douglass and abolition of slavery:

Harriet Jacobs was a slave and also saw the horrors of slavery. Harriet Jacobs had her own struggles to become a free woman. One part of the abolitionists believed that the Constitution of America was evil. But Frederick Douglass thought differently. He was not a free man yet; he published his autobiography and talked about slavery. He hated the idea that some people are born to be slaves and some people are just born free. In his biography, he asks himself, “Why am I a slave?” (Amend 00.12:52-00.14.08). By the year 1852, Douglass had become the most popular black person in the world. He knew that the Constitution was an anti-slavery document.

The founding fathers had not created a document that enshrined slavery or supported it. He believed that people like him were part of the national society (Amend 00.15.30–00.16.17). In a speech about the 4th of July, he talked about the terror and horrors of slavery he witnessed during his days as a slave. He gave an idea about the slaves on a slave ship and how it smelled, talked about slave auctions in the South, and how families were separated on the plantations. Black slaves gave free labor to the white masters without any wages or payment. The blacks were robbed of their liberty. The United States was guilty of practices that even disgraced a nation of savages (Amend 00.18:30–00:20:04). When Abraham Lincoln became president of the United States, he developed a friendship with Frederick Douglass. Lincoln invited a small number of black leaders to the White House. When the civil war started, black slaves joined the union army to achieve the union cause. Douglass urged Lincoln to abolish slavery. On April 9, 1863, the war ended. Douglass had a voice against slavery, and Lincoln made it possible through the 13th Amendment (Amend 00.33.02–00.35.56). The day Frederick Douglass was beaten by Convey and protested was the last time he was ever beaten by anyone. He had sworn to himself that he would become a free man and knew the value of freedom. He understood that the white masters were enslaving them for their own interests. He ran away from the plantations and came to Massachusetts. He was a refuge, and there was a price on his head. He took the risk of his life to flee from the bondage of slavery and become free. He believed that he deserved his freedom and had the right to become a free citizen like the white masters. He had a remarkable journey of

becoming a free man and abolitionist, the journey was full of obstacles and struggles but he was willing to risk it all for the abolishment of slavery. He became an abolitionist and started talking about the rights of black slaves, describing how slaves were tortured by white masters in newspaper articles. Through the famous newspaper *North Star*, he was able to reach a wider audience and get his message across. He wanted slavery to be abolished, and when Abraham Lincoln became president of America, Lincoln was against slavery to some extent, but he was not committed to abolishing slavery. When Lincoln met a few black leaders and Douglass, he realized that Mr. Frederick Douglass was a man with vision. The country will survive civil war, but slavery will not. As the civil war was going on, black slaves joined the Union army according to the invitation of Abraham Lincoln. Thousands of slaves made the Union army stronger, and they won the war. Frederick Douglass urged Abraham Lincoln that slavery should be abolished at once and black slaves should be given equal rights and status as they have fought for the country in times of distress. Lincoln was finally working to abolish slavery, and Frederick Douglass and he were friends. Douglass and his abolitionist voice played a huge role in the abolishment of slavery. Although Lincoln was assassinated, after 8 months of his death, the 13th Amendment was made and slavery was abolished.

Chapter 7

Conclusion:

Colonialism has changed many things around the world, affecting the cultures and traditions of continents worldwide. European settlers traveled to different parts of the world by sea and conquered new lands. Colonialism is a system where a group of people or a foreign nation controls another group of people or a nation. European colonization took place in Africa and parts of Asia. White settlers established small settlements and gradually occupied more and more land, solidifying colonial rule in the newly found parts of the world, such as America and Africa. According to the white Europeans, colonial rule was for the betterment of the colonized lands, as the whites had arrived to civilize, culture, and educate the nonwhite people or natives. Europeans assumed that the natives were inferior and savages by overlooking their customs and culture. Whites had a claim to be more superior and sophisticated, and they had the responsibility to make the colonized population cultured. But in the name of colonial rule and colonialism, their main initiative was to make the economy of their mother country stronger and more prosperous. They started trading goods from their colonized lands, and other regions under colonial rule were bound to trade only with the mother country of the colonizers. Which only profited then and served their interest. Europeans never had the internet to do anything good for the colonizers, as their rule only objectified the colonized natives. However, the Europeans used their advanced education system, military power, and religion as weapons against the colonized people and

spread colonialism. A significant factor was that Christian missionaries were established in the new colonial lands. Missionaries thought that the savage colonized people should get the blessings of Christianity, and it was the responsibility of the whites to do so. All the economic control and spread of Christianity helped the whites establish their colonial rule, and colonies soon became a part of the British Empire. Missionaries served the purpose of colonialism by converting natives into Christians. Establishing new colonies was a way for the British people to gain control of new territory. After Christopher Columbus set foot in America in 1429, native Indians were enslaved and worked in the fields or plantations. But it was not enough for them; there was a shortage of labor on the plantations. Europeans were looking for an effective work force. So, they looked towards Africa for it. When colonizers first came to Africa, they started providing weapons and goods to the native black Africans. But African kingdoms traded on the exchange of slaves. The blacks who were traded were war prisoners or poor people of African tribes. African kingdoms sold these black people to the Europeans to make their own kingdoms powerful; thus, they had a good supply of goods and firearms from the European colonizers. Though slavery was a part of culture in Africa and Asia that was different, as slaves had the freedom to move to higher positions in society and also raise a family with dignity. But chattel slavery in America gave slaves no rights, and slaves became property or like cattle for the white Europeans who settled in America. When slaves were brought from Africa, they were loaded on ships and transported to America by sea. This is known as the Trans-Atlantic slave trade; slaves

had no facilities on the ships as they were seen as cargo or goods. Slaves did not get any food or have proper space to even lie down. The captains and crew of the ships treated them like animals. Slaves were inspected and branded before they were loaded. A shocking fact was the number of slaves who died during the journey of the slave trade. Dead bodies were thrown into the sea. As a proof of purchase, the ears of the dead slaves were kept. As the slaves reached America, they were displayed on the auction block while naked, and slaves were sold. These slaves were naked or just covered their genitals with a piece of cloth. Slaves were treated like animals and had to suffer from the cruelty of slavery. Fredrick Douglass was a slave from birth, as he was born a slave whose parents were slaves as well. Plantations in newly colonized America were standing on an economy that was standing on the shoulders of slaves. Slaves had no obligation to protect themselves from the mistreatment of their white masters and could do nothing against them. Slaves had to obey any order of the white masters without even uttering a word. Masters had the freedom to have sex with any black woman on the plantations; whoever they chose had to have sex with the masters. It was very common in the South because it was commonly done by the masters of slaves. Owning slaves was a source of pride for the white people in America. As slavery was institutionalized, it was named chattel slavery, thus making the slaves more vulnerable in the eyes of the law and masters. Slaves were beaten, tortured, and raped until they died on the plantations. Families were separated, children right after birth were separated from their mothers, and often children or mothers were sold and sent to distant

plantations. Thus, they never experienced family bonds and affection. Fredrick Douglass only saw his mother a handful of times, as she was on a different plantation. Slaves were not given proper food or supplies and lived a life like any other animal. But Mr. Frederick Douglass was different; he had the desire to be free after he started learning from a white mistress. He became a freeman even after being born as a slave; he became an abolitionist and had a profound effect on the abolishment of slavery. As he was the owner of the North Star newspaper and was a very influential man, he became a friend of Abraham Lincoln, the anti-slavery president. He influenced and pushed Abraham Lincoln to abolish slavery. His story of running away from slavery was truly remarkable which inspired black slaves suffering in Chattel slavery. Douglass gave speeches against chattel slavery in front of a white audience, as he was very good at communication and was a lecturer. Black slaves joined the Union army according to the invitation of Abraham Lincoln. Thousands of slaves made the Union army stronger, and they won the war. Fredrick Douglass urged Abraham Lincoln that slavery should be abolished at once and black slaves should be given equal rights and status as they have fought for the country in times of distress. Lincoln was finally working to abolish slavery. Douglass was the central and main voice of the abolitionist movement and only because of his efforts and struggles slavery was abolished and black slaves become free men. . Finally, slavery was abolished through the 13th Amendment in 1865, Therefore, it can be stated that colonialism is the core factor behind

chattel slavery, and Fredrick Douglass portrays the dark reality of slavery in his autobiography, which was abolished in 1865 through the 13th Amendment.

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